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R E D E M P T I O N

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J E S U S C H R I S T.

Shewing from Scripture, the CHARACTER of our RE-
DEEMER, the NATURE of his REDEMPTION, and
the BENEFITS arising from it to MEN.

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INTRODUCTION.

A Great part of the *mistakes* about Religion have arisen from men's passing *too suddenly* from one object to another. Mankind naturally are disposed to proceed rapidly in their progress after truth : and seldom come to the true knowledge of it, by reason of not considering *one thing before another*. The words of *Job* may be fitly applied to mankind in general ;—" For vain man would be wise, though man is born like a wild asses colt, *Job xi. 12.*" Notwithstanding we are *dull* in our capacities in learning the knowledge of *truth*, yet we are *ever* ready to make *too much* haste, and to stretch ourselves beyond our measure.—Passing too quickly from *one* thing to *another*, we leave the former before we investigate *its* properties. " In seeking to become wise, we become fools," by stopping short in our enquiries before we understand *any* subject. Wisdom is not attained by the ordinary methods of seeking after her.—We should " search for her as for hid treasure." We ought not to leave *any* truth before we have examined it on *all sides*, and enquired into its various properties, on purpose to understand the *whole complex* or *particular notions* included in *its* general character :—How far it may be possible to know the several simple properties which are understood in *general terms*, or *universal propositions*.

IT is necessary if we would understand things as they are in their several constitutions, *physical, moral, and æconomical*, to examine the constitutions in which they are considered as *parts of a whole*. By this means we shall be led to consider the various relations which constitutional ideas have to one another :—Which may be of *singular service* to us in the chusing terms to express either general or particular things. By this means we shall proceed *gradually* from *one* property of *any* subject to another, and be able to distinguish between *primary* and *secondary truths*, and their qualities :—And know what we are already in the possession of ; and what we ought to enquire after, on purpose to consummate our knowledge.

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IT is a great part of our present infelicity that we think we have knowledge when we have *some perceptions*;—whereas perceptions are but the materials of knowledge, or the steps by which we advance to understanding. It is necessary that we judge our perceptions, and compare them with *those objects* which we think we perceive, otherwise what we call knowledge will be no more than a chaos of ill arranged perceptions, *buddled together without any order.*

ONE chief thing to be observed in all our pursuits after truth is *Analysis*. The Almighty has seen meet to represent Truth to men *as it were in bundles*, and when they are well directed in their enquiries after it, they proceed by *Analysis* to find out the several simples contained in *every* *concert*. But I must observe *here*, that we know *nothing* of absolute simplicity: Things to us are only simple by being compared with other things that are more complex; but we cannot say that we know *any* thing abstractly in a perfect sense. Our notions of simplicity are *entirely* formed from our notions of composition;—and we call things simple that are *farthest* from some known compound. Every object meets us at *first* in a compounded or constitutional state;—and our knowledge of constitutional truth consists in our being acquainted with the *Analysis* of its constitution. The several individual truths arranged in *such* a constitution; when considered distinct from the rest, are called *simple*.—This I take to be *all* that is implied in our ideas of simplicity. Our notions of simplicity are therefore *only* relative.

I shall observe before I proceed, that all our knowledge of the Divine Nature and Operations is founded upon a constitution of his government; and we attain to *that* knowledge by being *gradually* let into the *Analysis* of that constitution. By unfolding the *various* parts and *relations*, *principles* and *ends* of that constitution, the Deity makes *his ways* known to men;—and the whole system of physical and moral truth, as it relates to *this* constitution, comes to be known by comparing those parts and relations. The understanding of parts and their relations, in natural

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natural philosophy, may be called physical knowledge; the understanding of relations and ends, in morals, may be called *moral knowledge*. The term relation is truly no more than the condition of some object with regard to another in some system, either as to connection, or opposition. Relations are all the parts we possibly can conceive of, in a moral system, and in *any* moral constitution bear the same respect to one another, that parts, *properly so called*, do in *physics*, or *natural philosophy*.

Good and evil, are to one another as *heavy* and *light*, namely, opposites;—they are equally parts of the system they belong to. The term *part* is relative, and has a respect to a whole, as the term *good* is relative, and has a relation to *evil*. They are only so systematically, as far as we know; what they are in themselves, we cannot certainly say. Moral evil supposeth *some law* and constitution of government;—“For where there is no law, there “is no transgression.” It can therefore be evil *only* systematically, and cannot be conceived of, *out of a system*. The true knowledge of the constitution and system we belong to, with all the various relations and dispensations thereof, are taught us in *revelation*;—the right knowledge of the scriptures is the true *Analysis* of the divine government and administration. “Which are profitable for all “things to make the man of God perfect, and to furnish “him thoroughly for every good word and work, 2 *Tim.* iii. 17.”

THE plan of the divine government hath *never* varied, though the external administration thereof hath been various, at different times, since the beginning of the world. It argues the infinite capacity of the great author, that he hath supported an uniform plan of government, amidst the *various* dispensations thereof, among so many different nations and people.

THE first account we have of the conduct of the Almighty towards man is, that he made him after *his own image*, and placed *him* under a *law*;—which *law* he qualified *him* to obey, by endowing *him* with powers suitable to the *task* he enjoined *him*. The rest of the creatures
were

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were made subject to man, as the *Representative* of his *Maker* in this lower world. *Adam*, the first of our progenitors, was intrusted with the administration of government in this world, and was the *vicegerent* of his *Maker* over all the creatures; yet he himself was put under a *law*, and made *accountable* to the great Legislator of the universe. He was God's chief minister under this first constitution.

GOD, who is possessed of infinite prescience, could not but know what would be the issue of *Adam's* administration, had therefore provided against *all future contingencies*; yet saw meet to suffer a specimen to be handed down through all ages, what the most perfect beings were liable to when left entirely to the exercise of their own liberty. By permitting *Adam* to betray *his trust*, and suffering him to transgress that law he was placed under, *He* has evidently shewn that the most perfect human liberty, yea angelic freedom, cannot secure creatures in happiness, without the divine care and agency to uphold them. All human powers are created, and need as much the concurrence of the power of God to support them in their exercises, as it was necessary for their first existence: For it is true in a moral as well as a natural sense; "That in him we live, and move, and " have our being, *Acts* xvii. 28."

A D A M being the subject of his *Maker*, and his prime minister with respect to the creatures, by breaking that *positive law* concerning the *fruit* of the forbidden *tree*, lost his dominion over the creatures, and became liable himself to suffer punishment, because the law of that constitution threatened death in case of disobedience. It is manifest from scripture, that the first man being in a *public* character transmitted *his guilt* to *his posterity*; for the Apostle plainly declares, "That the judgment was by one " to condemnation," and "that death reigned by one " man's offence." That "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." That "by " one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, *Rom.* " v. 16, 17, 18, 19." It is plain from the Apostle's opinion of the first transgression, that it brought both *death* and *condemnation* along with it. How this was consistent with

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with *that* constitution-man *at first* was placed in; and how it was just in the Almighty to impute the sin of *Adam* to his posterity, may *next* fall under our consideration.

HERE we must confine our views of *justice*, to what was expressed in the law of the first constitution of man. According to that law, it was just for God to punish man with death and condemnation, because his offence was *treason* against the divine government, by affecting *independence*. The offence was aggravated by man attempting to be *like to God*, or rather *independent* upon Him. It was not *merely* a *simple* breach of *trust*, but an attempt to usurp the throne of the Almighty; it was *more* than disobedience of the law that the Almighty gave to *Adam*;—eating of that fruit *at any rate* might have deserved condemnation, but to eat thereof to be as God, was seeking to become Deities. As man had now taken part with beings who had already renounced the *Divine supremacy* as far as they could, it was but fit he should share in *their* punishment as far as the offence was *similar*.

WHENEVER *Adam* should have children, they could not but stand in a relation to him as a *parent under forfeiture* of happiness, till such time as it should appear whether they would approve of their father's misconduct or not:—For the *spirit of all laws* saith, that the sons of *traitors* shall not have the inheritance their fathers have forfeited, till once the government hath *some proof* of their fidelity. The imputation of the guilt of fathers to their children is implied in the *spirit of all laws*, and interwoven with *all forms* of wise government. But in case sons shall disapprove of their fathers conduct, and approve themselves worthy of the notice of the *Sovereign*, it is *but reasonable* that they be taken under his protection, and have the forfeiture removed which their parent brought upon their inheritance.—But this is far from being the case with the seed of *Adam*. They became partakers of the *same* rebellious temper of mind that was in him, and discover it as soon as they are able to do any thing.

NOT to carry this point too far, it was and is *just* in our Great Sovereign to impute the guilt of *Adam's* sin to

all his posterity, till *they* disapprove of his deed, and testify their dislike of it, by conformity to that law which he transgressed. But shall none of *his* race disapprove of *his* conduct, but walk in *his* very footsteps, what does the spirit of all good laws say, but that, the children shall suffer even for the sin of their fathers, and their own also? I heartily agree with what the Prophet says: “If a father beget
 “a son that seeth all his father’s sins which he hath done,
 “and considereth and doth not such like. If he walk in
 “the statutes of life without committing iniquity: he
 “shall surely live, he shall not die. He shall not bear the
 “iniquity of his father, *Ezek. xviii. 14. and xxxiii. 15.*”
 But where do we find among all the sons of *Adam* such wise and considerate children? Do not they “all go
 “astray as soon as they are born, and are estranged from
 “the very womb?” The scripture account of all men as descendants of *Adam* is; “There is none righteous, no
 “not one; there is none that understandeth, there is
 “none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out
 “of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable,
 “there is none that doth good, no not one, *Rom. iii. 10,*
 “*11, 12.*”

ADAM and all his posterity were now *justly* accounted *guilty* by the law of their constitution they were first placed in, both on account of the promise they despised, and the authority of God they set at nought. It would border upon profanity to say, that the Almighty placed man under a *faulty* constitution; for it seems to have been as well calculated for free agents, that are *dependent*, as any thing could be to answer an end. The most material objection that seems to have *any* weight in it, is at the same time *full of impiety*, namely, that God ought to have prevented what he knew would so much tend to the *hurt* of his rational creatures.—But not to mention the *absurdity* of saying what the Almighty *ought* to have done, we should rather conceive that God did things for the *best*;—and more especially, as it was through an abuse of the *best* of *privileges*, that man ruined *himself*. Liberty is what all wise men account a valuable privilege, and it is necessary to make rational creatures *accountable*; and had man at first not been formed a free agent, as far as a creature

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ture can be *dependently free*; he could neither had *merit*, nor *demerit*. It is sufficient to say, that God made man upright, and neither impelled him to the one side or the other; and as he had power to do good or evil, he is *justly* accountable for the abuse of *his liberty*. *The only source of moral obligation is the divine will*; and seeing God declared, that it was his pleasure that man should abstain from *the fruit of the forbidden tree*, it was an act of the *highest* rebellion against God, to gainsay his public declaration. Man was therefore condemned for a *breach* of moral obligation, attended with the *highest* aggravations.

IT would be needless to say what man lost through his disobedience;—the favour of his Maker, which is life, and every other blessing that tends to happiness he forfeited, *by sinning against God*. It would be absurd to say, that man could *really* enjoy life, when he had lost the *favour* of his Maker, in which it consisted;—what is therefore meant by death in the *full* extent of the word, under this constitution, is *misery and pain*, as well as the *dissolution* of the body *through mortality*. The fabric of this first constitution was *totally* ruined, as far as it respected human happiness; and the weight of its fall would have sunk the whole human race down to *endless* misery, had not the Almighty, who knew all future events *before-hand*, provided a remedy suitable to the breach made in that constitution. This law, which man was made under, stood in *full force* against him, and as it was the first public revelation of God's will, to which *he* had annexed a threatening, where *his veracity* was concerned; for the sake of his public credit, as the just governor of the universe, he deals with all men according to this *first* revelation of his will. This *Law, Covenant, Revelation*, or what you please to call it, comes always *first* under consideration when the Almighty deals with men.

As this is really the case, that the Almighty begins with every man of *Adam's* posterity, where their father ended, and is obliged in *honour* to do so, it appears *plainly*, that “by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be *justified*.” The Almighty cannot, *in character*, depart from the first publication of his will, and men cannot walk

walk up to it *since Adam fell*, but fall miserably short in *Principles, Measure, Motives, and Ends* :—The consequence is, they must either be miserable, or *some other scheme* must be revealed, suited to the character of God, and the miserable condition of mankind. The condition of mankind is very wretched through sin :—They are in consequence of the *justice and equity* of God, as a *Lawgiver*, expressed in *that law* given to man at first, consigned over to *death and condemnation* ;—they are held fast by the fetters of prejudice and corrupt affections, and have neither *will nor inclination* to do the will of God. Hence they are *doubly* in bondage ;—bound over to condemnation, by the sanction of the law of God ;—and bound by their own corrupt affections as *slaves* to the *God of this world*. Whatever different *Theories* men may have of this matter, every man, in *fact*, feels the truth of this double bondage ;—which they plainly discover by fears at death, and enmity to truth while they live.

SUCH is the state and condition of man, that without a *Redeemer* he can have *no* hope of happiness, nor *any* real pleasure in this life.—*Redemption by the blood of Jesus Christ* is necessary to *give hope* of happiness to men : And *this* shall now be considered.





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R E D E M P T I O N.

C H A P. I.

Shewing the Nature of Redemption according to Scripture; wherein it consisteth, and what Qualifications were requisite in the Redeemer to accomplish it.

S E C T. 1st.

 R E D E M P T I O N, in Scripture, signifies the buying back something that is *lost, alienated, or mortgaged*; or, it signifies deliverance from *danger, violence, or oppression*. It is applied to persons or things; to either the *lives or estates* of men. It always has relation to some *law of equity, and moral justice*. That redemption which our *Lord Jesus Christ* wrought for his people, was also according to the *law and justice* of the first constitution which man was placed in. It was observed in the introduction, that the will of God is the *source of moral obligation*; it was his revealed will, that man should have kept that positive law he gave him, in a state of innocence, or in case he should transgress the precept that was given to him, he should fall under the *weight of the threatening*, and *forfeit the favour of his Maker*, in which his true life and happiness consisted; for in the *favour of the Almighty* is life;

yea, it is in scripture said to be *better than life*, in as much as moral satisfaction is *better than mere* creature existence. The threatening implied what is death in a moral sense: The *want* of friendship with God, and in consequence thereof, *pain* and *bitter* remorse of soul, at the apprehension of the divine displeasure, and the thoughts of *future evil*.

THE Almighty placed our first parents under a *very easy* and equitable law;—he laid no heavier burthen upon them than a *single prohibition*, to put them in mind of their dependence upon their Maker. He gave them all things *richly* to enjoy, and did not *sparingly* distribute his bounty unto them; only, as was just, he put them in mind of their dependence, by withholding from them the fruit of a *single tree*. While man kept the *supremacy* and *moral character* of God in his eye, there was no danger of his breaking his law; but he forgot that he was dependent, and brake the law of his Maker, by affecting to be *his equal*. By affecting independence upon God who made him, he became like *the beasts that perish*. The threatening pursued him fast: “For the Lord drove out “the man.” The presence of JEHOVAH, in which a perfect creature cannot but have the *most exquisite* pleasure, became dreadful to minds *so conscious* of their guilt: “*Adam* and his wife hid themselves from the Lord God, “among the trees of the garden.” But *boundless* mercy, which never had *any* motive but the Sovereign Pleasure from whence it flowed, in *due time* revealed a Saviour, and made known a reason of hope to man, who had nothing in himself but every reason of despair. A Saviour is promised, and Redemption through his blood:—“The “seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” But will God *truly* pass over the *spirit* and *intention* of his law to man, and make *void* his Own word and declaration, in that positive affirmation of His holiness: “In the “day that thou eatest, thou shalt die.” Shall God’s moral character, as a righteous Legislator, suffer for the sake of man, *that is a worm*, and the son of man, *that is a worm*? This would expose the character of the God of truth, and give reason for rebellious mortals to *presume* upon his mercy and goodness. Shall ever favour be bestowed

bestowed upon guilty man, it must be in consistency with that *first revelation* which God made to the world. If sinners be saved and redeemed from sin and punishment, it must be *according to law*.

THE law which JEAOVAH gave to his rational creature, man, was *easy, reasonable and light*; and could be *no way* hard or difficult to *such* perfect creatures as our first parents were;—and as this first moral precept was an abstract of all righteousness, and implied all the duties which dependence upon the Almighty binds men to observe; so *no deed or action*, contrary to this law, done by any in the nature of man, could be lawful and right.—And supposing this law either broken or *strictly* observed, it was still the condition of life and happiness to the posterity of *Adam*. In keeping of it, it is plain that *life* was the *reward*, and in case it should be broken, *death* should be *the wages*;—"The wages of sin is death, but "the gift of God is eternal life, *Rom. vi. 23.*" Upon supposition that man should *transgress*, and be *exposed* to the curse of the law; if any should be so wise, mighty, and merciful, as to redeem him from his misery, this law was still to come under the *first consideration*, and the happiness to be obtained must be consistent with *this abstract* of the *will of God*.

As God's moral character was concerned in this rule of righteousness, and called in question by man's disobedience;—so there was *no other way* known to us, how his character and our salvation might be made consistent; but by beginning where our first parents *failed*. To have overlooked the first transgression of his law altogether, would have represented man's duty not so necessary as God said it was, when *He* annexed the threatening of *death* to *disobedience*;—"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." For suppose we ought not to attempt, "to limit the holy one of Israel," in the exercise of his attributes, nor say what he might or could do;—yet we may say, according to what he has revealed to us in *his word*, he could not have granted life to man without first having respect to his own holy character, expressed

pressed in *his law*;—as, “the Judge of all the earth,
“he must do right.”

WHENEVER God intended to express his mercy and compassion towards miserable mortals, it was necessary that his wisdom should devise a method, whereby mercy and compassion might appear consistent with the truth of the divine threatening, and the purity of the holy law. We find from scripture, that benevolence and wisdom are both conspicuous in the plan of man's happiness; Wisdom, in contriving a scheme where there is the *Greatest* goodwill to men, and yet the divine law taken first into consideration; Benevolence, in taking into consideration the case of *enemies, wretched, and miserable*, and conferring favours upon them, they never could have deserved. This is clearly pointed out in the xl. *Psal.* ver. 6. “When
“sacrifice and offerings were not required,” JEHOVAH, the Messiah, says; “a body hast thou prepared me, I delight to do thy will, O my God,—thy law I have
“within my heart.” Christ was made under the very *same law* which the first man transgressed. He was made subject to all *its* precepts, to obtain a title to eternal life to all his seed, according to the covenant of promise, and subjected to *its* curse to redeem them from temporal, spiritual, and eternal death.—From temporal death, as to its sting;—from spiritual death, as to its power;—and from eternal death, as to its nature, degrees, and consequences.

THE *chief end* of man was to *glorify God*, by doing *his will*, and CHRIST had a *special* respect to this end;—“I delight to do thy will.” The Redemption obtained by JESUS CHRIST, and applied to believers, is neither *more nor less*, than a perfect fulfilling of the chief end of man;—which was *at first*, and still is, *to glorify God*, and *to enjoy him for ever*. CHRIST, as our Redeemer, was made *under the law of God* in all *its various forms*. “In
“the fullness of time, God sent forth his son, made of
“a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that
“were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, *Gal.* iv. 4.”

HE was made under the law in that form in which it was revealed to our first parents, both as to *its commandment and curse*.—As a rule of righteousness, it was the delight of his life ;—and he called *it*, with all the other forms of *it*, *His Father's business*. He was made under the law of God in its ceremonial form, as connected with the doctrine of *all* the prophets ;—“ for he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them, “ *Matth. v. 17.*”

IT would lead me from my subject to give instances of each of them.—But in a word, That Redemption which our Redeemer perfected, was according to all the known forms of the divine law : But more than *all*, it was perfectly conformable to the *spirit* of the law of God. The *spirit* of our Saviour's obedience was quite answerable to the *intention* and *spirit* of the law of God : The *principles* and *motives* from whence he *acted, served, and obeyed*, were *holy, just, and pure* ;—love to God and man were his *devoted principles*. His motives were to glorify Him that sent him ; to deliver his people from wrath, and make them happy ;—His end to give such a representation of God's moral character to the world, as should appear quite consistent with itself, and the first revelation of God to man. In the Messiah those draughts of moral character, *mercy and truth, righteousness and peace*, met together, and in the *most* regular, moral œconomy, shewed the justice of the divine proceedings, and vindicated the *ways of God to man*. Whatever was intended by the *spirit* of the *first law*, and *revelation* of the *will of God*, was by our Saviour's Redemption perfectly fulfilled.

THE best of men, *even* when they observe the *letter* of the law of God, are much defective as to the *springs* of action, and fall much short of the spirit and design of God's holy commandment.—But CHRIST had the whole law in its *largest extent* and *compass* in *his heart*, and could say with the strictest propriety : “ I have respect to “ *all thy commandments.*” This Redemption which JESUS CHRIST perfected was according to law, because he

he was appointed to the office of Redeemer by the oath of God. As the High Priest over the house of God, he was consecrated and appointed to fulfil the law, for those whom he represented as a High Priest:—"The Lord hath sworn
"and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, *Psal. cx. 4.*"

THE *Messiah*, the son of the Highest, was made a Priest by an *Oath*,—which is generally accounted the *most* solemn and *surest* ratification of *any deed, law, or office*. The Apostle to the *Hebrews* says, "that the word of the
"oath maketh the son a priest, *Heb. vii. 28.*" i. e. Maketh him one in the divine appointment of JEHOVAH, which is the same with *any law* that *ever* was revealed.

OUR Saviour in his death, and offering of himself an atonement for our sins, had a *special* view to the law and appointment of God: "I have power to lay down my
"life, and power to take it up again, this commandment
"have I received of my father, *John x. 18.*" The High Priest who was a type of JESUS CHRIST, upon the day of expiation, was obliged to observe *strictly* the law of atonement;—for upon it depended both his own life, and the ceremonial remission of the sins of the congregation. The least deviation from the law was death to the priest, and non-acceptance to the people:—The whole congregation therefore stood without in *great fear and terror*, in the outer court, till the expiation was finished, and the priest came out from the *holy of holies*. What supported their hope in the midst of their fears was, the *sound* of the *bells* that were upon the *hem* of his garments, which were heard in the outer court. "And it shall be
"upon Aaron and his sons to minister: And his sound
"shall be heard when he goeth into the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die
"not, *Exod. xxviii. 33.*"—And it is an evidence to us that *our High Priest* hath observed the law of the atonement, appointed him,—when *now* that he is gone to heaven, the *holy place* not made with hands, we hear the *sound* of his acceptance in the *Gospel*, which publisheth "repentance and remission of sins through his blood." It is a sign that JESUS CHRIST, our High Priest, is alive, and his sacrifice is accepted of as an atonement for his church

church and people, when *life* and *immortality* are published through his death, in the gospel, to *the chief of sinners*.
 “ I am alive, *says he*, for evermore, and have the keys of
 “ hell and death, *Rev. i. 18.*”

S E C T. 2d.

THIS Redemption was *vicarious*, or one redeeming others, by being substitute in their place; one paying a price of Redemption as a representative of others, who were guilty. JESUS CHRIST is in this respect, “ the
 “ surety of the better covenant.” When *he* assumed the office of Redeemer he obliged himself to *do* and *perform* what his people *ought* to have done, and to suffer what they ought to have suffered.—All the *sin-offerings* under the law were *types* and *figures* of *him*, and had their full accomplishment in that offering which he made of himself in the fullness of time. It was impossible that the whole human race, or *any* individual amongst *them*, could make a sufficient atonement for their guilt;—man’s Redemption would have ceased *for ever*, for all that any mortal could have done to obtain it: “ But the Lord laid
 “ on him the iniquities of us all;” and in his mercy provided for himself a *true* sin-offering.

THERE was a transmutation of guilt from the *principle* to the *surety*;—which in scripture is called, *bearing our sins*. Our Redeemer is said “ to bear our sins on his
 “ own body on the tree, 1 *Pet. ii. 24.*”†

T H A T

† The words *οἱ ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἀνέβησαν*, might read thus, *Who himself lifted up our sins in his own body upon the Tree*, viz. the cross;—which he could not have done unless they had been imputed to him, or transferred upon him. The Apostle seems to refer to *Isa. liii. 4.* where the prophet says, “ He was wounded for our transgressions, he was
 “ bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon
 “ him, and with his stripes we are healed.” The original words are very strong, and much more expressive than our translation: *Ve-lu me-
 cholal mip-shanemu, meducah me-avonotenu, nusar shelomenu Gnalav, U-backa-
 burato ni-rpah.* They may be thus rendered: *He was pierced through for
 our iniquities, he was bruised to dust for our sins: The transferring of our punish-
 ment was upon him, and by his stripes we are made whole.* These words ex-
 press the sufferings of Christ in the strongest manner, and point out the
 reason and the effects of them clearly and emphatically. The

THAT this was the case we have no reason to doubt, if we believe divine revelation; for the scripture is both *full* and *plain* on this subject. “*Isa.* liii. 6. All we, like
 “lost sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one
 “to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the
 “iniquities of us all. *1 Pet.* ii. 24. who himself bare our
 “sins on his own body on the tree. *2 Cor.* v. 21. For he
 “hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin, that we
 “might be made the righteousness of God in him. *1 Pet.*
 “iii. 18. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the
 “just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, be-
 “ing put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the
 “spirit.” If words have any meaning at all, those texts
 must point out one suffering for another;—and since God
 has so assured us in his word of this truth, it would be
 presumption in us to say, it was inconsistent with *his*
character to demand satisfaction, when he has told us the
 contrary by his own *express testimony*.

DR SIKES, and some others, would willingly explain
 away the meaning of these passages, without giving them
 a *better*, yea, without giving them any meaning at all, and
 say, they cannot mean a *vicarious* Redemption; for this
 would be contrary to the character of God:—But how
 came those *Critics* to be *better* informed what was suitable
 to the divine character than the Deity himself? It is
 evident from both the Old and New Testaments, that
 the Almighty did not want those passages to have *any*
 other meaning, than a *common* reader may find at *first*
instance, because he has often repeated them after the
 same manner, and does not seem to have thought that
 understanding them so would injure his character. In
 scripture, where the Almighty speaks in a mystical and
 figurative

The reasons of our acceptance with God, and the cause of our sanc-
 tification, are plainly pointed out in them. If we compare the words in
 this passage with the 10th verse of this chap. and with these words God
 spake from the excellent Glory: “This is my beloved son, in whom I
 “am well pleased,” it will be found, that God is *only* perfectly pleased
 with his own son, and with sinners for what he hath done and suffered.

As our guilt is pardoned *only* on account of what Christ hath suffered,
 so the wounds and moral bruises of our souls by sin, are healed by his
 stripes.

figurative manner, it is plain he does not want to have his words understood *literally*, and always explains *his meaning* by other plain passages of scripture:—But with regard to *those* already cited, we do not find *any* other passages, when taken in their *connection* and *scope*, that lead us to any other meaning.

ONE would be ready to apprehend that such literary censors are more zealous for their own pride, than for the character of the Deity, and rather suppose what they themselves would do, if they were in his place, than what they are sure is his mind and will. What their wisdom thinks best, they conclude is fittest for the character of their maker;—and have the *assurance* to say what *he ought* to do, even when he has said the quite contrary:—Nor will they allow the Deity to be the properest judge of his own character. They have a *standard* quite above both God and the Scriptures, namely, their *own natural notions*:—What is not suitable to *these*, they will not allow to be consistent with either the divine character or common sense.—Nothing is more contrary, and inconsistent with *their notions*, than *vicarious* Redemption, when it implies punishment. It is indeed surprising, that these wise men who know the character of the Deity so well by their natural notions, should give such visible demonstrations of their ignorance;—when in every branch of their conduct in very momentous matters, they are not *very* studious to imitate *that* character they pretend to know, more than other people. They tell us that the Almighty is all goodness, which no sober man will deny more than they, but will perhaps say, that he is as much all justice, equity and holiness.—But not to say *any thing* of the absurdity of pretending to say what the Deity is,—which no man can tell further than he himself hath revealed, it might be expected if they believed the Almighty was *so very good*, that they would imitate his character. If indulging the passions, and gratifying the appetites, be imitations of God in goodness, those devotees of goodness have made *considerable* attainments.—They can receive bondsmen for debts, throw debtors into jail, domineer over their inferiors and dependents like other men;—and if their lives and conduct

be a real imitation of their *Deity*, they are in some jeopardy notwithstanding of that goodness they have learned by their natural notions. They in real life express as much vengeance towards those who injure or offend them, as the *rest* of their fellow men that differ from them in sentiment; and when *fairly* provoked, forget what they profess to believe concerning their Maker:—And though they conceive the Deity to be so good as to demand no satisfaction, yet they want to be satisfied themselves. Such conduct is a *burlesque* of their pretended belief, and makes *them* truly ridiculous. If the Deity, they profess to worship, be as unmerciful as they themselves are, notwithstanding of that goodness they boast of, they are in danger of being miserable enough. But after all, it seems not more inconsistent with God to accept of a *vicarious* Atonement, or Redemption, and CHRIST to give it, than it was inconsistent with him to make the world: For if we consider the character of God, revealed to us in his word, and not what our *natural notions* suggest, we will find it drawn in such a manner, that this world, as it now appears, is not answerable to that character, *i. e.* it is nothing in comparison with what God could have made it.—And we may as well complain of God for not making us angels, as complain of his conduct for requiring an atonement for our sins;—for God was good before Time, as well as after it commenced, and according to *some people's natural notions* of goodness, should have made man so that he could not have fallen;—or in other words, made him a Deity; for this is the language of pride, “ye shall be as Gods.”

THERE was certainly necessity for a *vicarious* Redemption, otherwise God would not have required *any*;—but in his dispensations towards the *Jews*, *vicarious atonements* were among the first institutions that were made a *part* of their religious *æconomy*. The Apostle to the *Hebrews* informs us, that all these *vicarious* atonements were shadows of *Christ to come*, yea that the whole *Tabernacle* and *Temple* service were figures of JESUS CHRIST, the true Messiah.—And we are expressly told, that “he came in the end of
“time to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, *Heb.*
“x.

“X. I, II. That he was manifested to take away sin,
“and in him was no sin, 1 *John* iii. 5.”

IT seems to have been the common opinion of all nations, where *any* notions of God ever entered, that there was necessity for *vicarious Atonements*;—for all nations whose story we have mentioned *in history*, had some rituals of this sort, in their religious worship.—But *common sense* tells us, that it is not inconsistent with the Almighty's goodness to demand a *vicarious* Redemption;—for what is the meaning of requiring satisfaction for the breach of human laws, if this notion of satisfaction be not taken from *some notices* we have received from the Deity? If it be good for civil government, which all men, for the most part, agree is from God, *thus* to demand *satisfaction* in the lower *system* of his administration, it cannot well be supposed inconsistent with his goodness to demand satisfaction in the more exalted part of his government.

THAT this Redemption was *vicarious* will appear from the *very goodness of God* made use of against its necessity.—For how was it consistent with the Divine Goodness to make CHRIST suffer such grievous sorrows, if he was in no sense guilty?—For it is agreed on all hands, that he had no sin of his own. It is abundantly evident from scripture, that there never were *any sorrow* like unto his. “Is it nothing unto you all ye that pass by? Behold,
“and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow,
“which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath
“afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger, *Lam.* i. 12.” Could there be any thing more tyrannical and arbitrary, than to make an innocent person undergo such grievous sufferings,—when JEHOVAH from the excellent glory had declared he was well pleased with him? In punishing an offender there is *nothing unjust*, or contrary to the nature of moral goodness;—but to punish an innocent person, *so well approved* of by God, is not so *easily* accounted for. Revelation *only* can satisfy us as to this: “He bare our sins
“in his own body on the tree, 1 *Pet.* ii. 28. The Lord
“laid on him the iniquities of us all, *Isa.* liii. 8.”

IF JESUS CHRIST came to set us an example of patience

tience and resignation to the will of God under all our afflictions and sufferings,—and this was all that was intended by his death :—Why did God himself afflict him so grievously in his soul, with such *horrible terrors*, which made the very blood sweat from his body, when there were no visible trouble upon him ? This does not well agree with the character of the Almighty :—“ Who doth not afflict “ willingly, nor grieve the children of men without a “ a cause.” There was certainly *something more* than example here ; otherwise, it was all in vain, for never man was or will be able to copy after it.—What had *almost* broke the heart of our Redeemer, would *altogether* break the hearts of the sons of men. JESUS CHRIST himself seems to have had *quite* different views in his sufferings,—for he says to those who came to apprehend him, “ If ye “ seek me, let these go their way, *John* xviii. 8.” He seems plainly to have considered himself as a *vicarious Redeemer*, one substitute in the room and place of others. But if CHRIST came only to instruct us as a Prophet, and to set us an example by his sufferings, he has set before us the *most fearful example* that ever was set before *mortals* :—An example of bearing the punishment of sin, and the wrath of God, due on account of our iniquity, Ah fearful example ! Tremendous pattern ! Who among the sons of men can follow the footsteps of such a Saviour ? What *so severely* scorched the green tree, would effectually burn up all the dry ones ;—and unless men were qualified in the same degree that CHRIST was, his *very* example would be a sufficient hell to them. Ye followers of CHRIST upon this plan ! Could you follow him to the garden of *Gethsemane*, with all that anguish of soul which he suffered there ? Could you undergo such a bloody sweat as JESUS did, and live ?

NONE but a divine person could endure such grief and sorrow, as were inflicted upon JESUS CHRIST ;—and unless CHRIST could endow his people with the same degree of perfection, power, and holiness that was in him, it would be impossible to copy his pattern.

T H A T our Redeemer did bear the wrath of God, the scriptures affirm expressly ; “ Thy wrath lieth hard upon
“ me,

“ me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves :—
 “ Thy fierce wrath goeth over me ; thy terrors have cut
 “ me off, *Psal.* lxxxviii. 7, 16.” It is because the chastisement of our peace was upon him, that he suffered such grievous sorrows, and because he came in the room of the guilty, that he suffered unto death ;—and not merely to set us an example. “ He gave himself a ransom to redeem
 “ us from all iniquity, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.”—From all which it appears evident that our LORD’s Redemption was *vicarious*.

S E C T. 3d.

THIS Redemption was a procuring of that inheritance which man lost. Man’s portion and inheritance, whereby he could have lived happy, and enjoyed life, was the favour and fellowship of his Maker :—This enjoyment he forfeited by breaking the divine law, and transgressing the holy commandment.—Man was driven from his inheritance, and became a vagabond upon the earth, for renouncing his allegiance to the Almighty. He had nothing after he had sinned that he could call his own, but what he would have been better without ; namely, the divine displeasure, threatened in the sanction of the law of works :—And besides, he was miserable by what he had lost. All enjoyments whatsoever, unless connected with the divine favour, tend only to make the curse sit faster upon guilty minds. It is only in the favour of God there is life ; all other vital acts are only the shadow of life :—For without the favour of God a man is dead while he liveth. When God created man at first, he made him lord of this lower world, and heir of everlasting felicity in the next, upon condition, that he should obey that law which he gave him, as the test of his dependence upon him ; and his acknowledgment of his Maker’s sovereignty. His faithful service for a season, would have entitled him to a crown of immortal life ;—but he sold himself to Satan, for the pleasures of sense, and lost his liberty by gratifying his taste. “ By seeking to become
 “ wise,

“ wise, he became a fool,” and marred his happiness, by stretching its limits beyond the divine prohibition. By giving himself up to be the servant of sin and Satan, God, in righteous judgment, condemned him to be their slaves; and instead of that blessed inheritance of immortal life, he had reason, as the son of God, to expect, if he had continued in his service, he was made a slave to the devil, and a subject of death. Through pride and seduction he lost an inheritance which would have for ever enriched both him and his posterity.

Now, man is miserable for wanting what only can make him happy, and is not able to pay a ransom for what he hath lost. But God, who is abundant in love, and infinite in mercy, sent his son in human nature,—who hath given his life’s blood to redeem the lost inheritance. The strong One, JEHOVAH’s partner, the Man, his Fellow, or of his Right Hand, was sent to redeem that forfeited inheritance, that his “ little ones might not perish, but have everlasting life.” This holy life and obedience, which we call active, to distinguish it from his passion and sufferings, is the meritorious reason of men’s being received again into the favour of God. It was through disobedience that man lost the favour of his Maker, and it is by obedience, that any of fallen *Adam’s* posterity are restored to it again:—For, “ as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous, *Rom. v. 19.*” But before our Redeemer could procure the favour of God, as an inheritance to eternal life, it was necessary that he should be related to those for whom he was to obtain it.*

I T

* That question, whether JESUS CHRIST procured the love of God, is a very needless one. Had those who moved it attended to the plain meaning of words, they would never have proposed it.

Love and Benevolence, in as far as we know any thing of them, are the same, namely, Sovereign Good Pleasure. Favour and Acceptance also signify the same thing, and may be expressed by the word Friendship. Though JESUS CHRIST did not procure the Divine good will, yet he obtained our acceptance with God. The Apostle tells us, “ *Eph. ii. 18* That through him we have access by one spirit to the Father;”—which the Apostle to the *Hebrews* says, is obtained by the blood of CHRIST, “ *Heb. x. 19.* Having therefore, brethren, boldness, “ to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus.”

The

IT was by his holy active obedience, that he procured that favour which man lost by his sin and transgression.
The

The Almighty, according to his moral character, expressed in the first public revelation of his will, is a declared enemy to sin; and as the Supreme and righteous Governor of the world, an enemy to sinners on account of it. But this implies no more than the opposition of his infinitely perfect moral character, to the guilty and vile character of sinners.

There is no such passion in the Divine nature as hatred;—it is only the opposition of his nature to what is opposite to and unlike itself.

God bestows his love or good-will sovereignly, without any reason out of himself: He loves because he pleaseth.—But his favour and friendship are bestowed upon the guilty for moral considerations. He gave his son freely, and sovereignly, without any reason but his good pleasure;—but he bestows his favours upon sinners for his son's sake, “*I/a.*” liii. II. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant make many “righteous, for he shall carry their iniquities imposed upon him.” Where the connection between our Saviour's bearing the sins of his people, and their justification is manifest. The Divine good-will and pleasure is the source of all grace and favour to guilty men;—but the blood of JESUS CHRIST is the channel through which these favours are conveyed to them. The first channel through which the favour of God was conveyed to the world was stoped by the offence of our first parents: Favour, friendship, and acceptance with God, could no more run in that channel.—But JESUS CHRIST, by giving his life's blood for that offence, hath opened “a new and living way,” whereby grace and favour “might reign through his righteousness” to the most worthless and chief of sinners, consistently with JEHOVAH's moral character, expressed in the first revelation of his will.

The Divine love or good-will considers all the chosen of God as one in CHRIST, but his grace and favour respect them as many members of the one body. The Almighty had but one good-will to all his people, as the body of CHRIST, which he expressed in “choosing them in” him before the world began:” But his favours are many, according to the number and wants of his members. It is agreed, almost on all hands, that man lost the favour of God, by transgressing his law.—It is also manifest from scripture that man's life lies in the favour of his Maker. If this is really the case, that the first man lost life and happiness, by forfeiting the favour of the Almighty, it is as manifest that the second man obtained it to his people, by procuring his favour. Eternal life which lies in the favour of God, is now bestowed through the channel of a ransom, or purchase, which our Redeemer paid to remove the forfeiture of happiness, by shedding his blood.

The Apostle tells us, “that the gift of God is eternal life through” “Jesus Christ our Lord;” for though our Redeemer paid the ransom price of his blood for the christian's inheritance, it is still the gift of God to us, as much as it had never been procured by price;—because we can give nothing for its ransom.—Besides, it was JEHOVAH himself that provided, and was pleased to admit a Goal. According to the first revelation of the will of God, Redemption was necessary to clear the character of the Lawgiver from all imputation of unrighteousness,—and

The whole human race had forfeited their right to communion and fellowship with God,—so there was a forfeiture

so he shewed, in all his after-dealings with men, a respect to that first revelation.

But to fulfil the purpose of his good-will, he provided a Goal or Kinsman Saviour, who should fulfil the whole of the first law, as to both the *letter* and *spirit* of it; and thereby open free access to sinners to the favour and friendship of God. With respect to that first law, the death of CHRIST was in reality a ransom price: For he came into the world to fulfil it. Eternal life is the purchase of CHRIST as far as it respects that law which threatened everlasting punishment, but it is the gift of God, as far as God provided a Redeemer, and was pleased to admit of a surety. None of these things, according to the spirit of the first revelation, he was obliged to do. Eternal life, the Apostle tells us, “was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began:”—But it was given to him to work out by his obedience unto death,—so by his death he wrought out eternal life. Believers therefore obtain eternal life by a *work which Christ finished upon the cross*. Fallen men are like a son banished from his father's house, for breaking the laws of the family, and rebelling against his father. The father according to the laws of his house, cannot receive his son into favour without some atonement and satisfaction for the rebellion against his supremacy, for if he should, it would shew that his laws were of no weight.—Yet notwithstanding his good-will to his prodigal son inclines him to find out a friend, or prevail with the elder brother, to pay the prodigal son's ransom;—that he may again receive him into favour, and the rest of his dependents may see how righteous and just he is,—and his son may feel how gracious and good both his father and elder brother are.

The love and benevolence of the father is the reason of him prevailing with the elder brother to pay the ransom,—but it is the ransom which the elder brother pays that is the reason of the prodigal's being again received into favour. The younger brother is justified and acquitted from the guilt on account of the elder brother becoming his *Goal or Redeemer*.

Dr Gill, and some others, by not attending to the plain distinction between *Benevolence* and *Favour*, have endeavoured to support an eternal justification of the elect;—and because God out of his good pleasure decreed to justify them, have concluded that they are really justified. But they ought to have considered, that the divine love is not the reason in law whereby sinners are acquitted from the guilt of an *evil action*, but *some deed conformable to the moral justice and equity* expressed in the first publication of the will of God.—For upon the same principles that eternal justification is built upon,—eternal guilt and condemnation may also be supported.—Also the eternal existence of men, and the revelation of a law to them;—*for where there is no law, there is no transgression*. The sons of God were like *Abolom* in the land of the *Philistines*, out of favour, but the King's good-will or love was not abated towards them. It was God's benevolence that made him send his son to pay the price of man's Redemption, that he might, consistently with that public character, which he first assumed, as a *lawgiver* to men, receive sinners into favour. CHRIST'S doing and suffering were all that law and justice could

ture upon their inheritance, which was necessary to be removed, before they could again enter upon the possession. This forfeiture our LORD JESUS CHRIST paid by his obedience unto death, and hath restored his people into the forfeited favour of God, and makes them partakers of those divine pleasures that are in his presence. It was continuing in the service of God, that would have secured the inheritance of eternal life to man;—and it was by our first parents, their coming short, before the time of probation was ended, that they and their seed lost that inheritance:—"For cursed is he that continueth not in "all things written in the book of the law to do them." Had there been no sanction annexed to the law, then any person who had been able to have taken up the cask where *Adam* left it, might have set all to right again.—But justice had a claim for satisfaction, by virtue of the curse annexed to the law; "in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die." Our Redeemer was therefore obliged to fulfil that law which man left unfinished, that he might procure access into the divine favour,—and also to bear the curse,—that the justice and truth of JEHOVAH's character might appear, in re-instating man into the favour of his Maker. But as man was also himself a prisoner, as well as an insolvent debtor to justice, there was still something more necessary.

S E C T. 4th.

THIS Redemption which CHRIST accomplished for his people, was a Redemption of persons. There was a necessity of loosing the bonds of the prisoners, and of opening the prison doors, as well as procuring a good inheritance in the enjoyment of the favour of God. The divine favour is what the servants of sin cannot enjoy;—because they are Satan's captives, and led by him at his pleasure. This Redemption of the persons of believers was two-fold, according to the nature of their bondage. They were bound over by a just sentence of the law to

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death, could demand, and were fully as powerful and prevalent to restore the guilty to favour, as man's disobedience was to cast him out of it.

death, and were arrested at the instance of justice, and could not get clear till the uttermost farthing was paid. In this sense they are held like persons under attainder,—as guilty of treason, against the Sovereign of heaven and earth. Nothing but the *price of blood* could release them; so the Prophet informs us, “That by the blood of the covenant, Christ brings forth the prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water.” He paid the price of their Redemption by his precious blood, and died to rescue them out of the prison of spiritual and eternal death. He paid their ransom by his blood, and hath delivered them from going down to the pit.—By virtue of this ransom, their persons became his property, and he sets them free agreeable to both law and justice.—Hence they are justified and acquitted from the curse by which they were held,—which like a heavy chain held them fast in the prison of spiritual death,—so that they were unable to move in *any* holy acts of duty towards God.†

BUT not only are men, as they are the descendants of the first Adam, prisoners of justice, but they are also captives to sin and Satan, made to grind in his prison-house, by serving divers lusts and pleasures. Christ redeems them from Satan’s dominion by his power, as he delivers them from justice by the price of his blood:—So hereby the captives are delivered, “and the prey of the terrible taken away.”

THIS deliverance the Redeemer performs by the gospel which is the “rod of his strength sent out of mount Zion.” whereby he pulls down Satan’s kingdom, and relieves his people. Satan, that cruel enemy of man’s happiness, is not willing to part with his captives, and notwithstanding of their ransom being paid, endeavours to hold them fast in the fetters of sin and prejudice.—But, “their Redeemer is mighty, the LORD OF HOSTS is his name, *Jer. l. 34*.”—He sends his powerful word,

come

† The curse of the law hinders men in the practice of moral duty, because it leaves them no hopes,—without which no man living will pursue virtuous actions. It is the hope of the glory of God that makes men rejoice in tribulations, suffer patiently unto the end;—but no man can have any reason of hope who is under the curse.

come forth, and all the powers of hell cannot hold them longer.

THE gospel, as the rod of CHRIST's power, bruiseeth Satan under his people's feet, and persuades and enables them to flee from the wrath to come. This part of the Redemption which our Redeemer performs, consists in changing the purposes of his people's minds by the superior evidence of the gospel of peace: It is by the Apostle, "*Rom. viii. 2.*" called, a fulfilling of the law in "them."—This is a Redemption of the persons of believers with a strong hand, and belongs to JESUS CHRIST under the character of a Conqueror,—“travelling in the “greatness of his strength.” The gospel, which is a “stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the “Greeks, is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, “in calling his people out of darkness into his marvelous “light.” The word of truth, however simple in itself, is by the evidence which the spirit that speaks in it, gives it, “mighty through God to pull down strong holds, “and every imagination, that exalteth itself against the “kingdom of Christ.” Its evidence ariseth from its simplicity, and is not like “the enticing words of man’s “wisdom,” which please those who belong to the kingdoms of this world. It flatters no man while in a state of sin, or while living in the practice of it, but plainly tells him his doom, while he remains in that condition:—But at the same time, “proclaims liberty to the captives, “and the opening of the prison doors to those who are “bound.” It exhibits very great and precious promises, to all who believe in JESUS CHRIST, and affords the surest reason of hope to the miserable and wretched. It speaks nothing but woes to hypocrites, and such as go about to establish a righteousness of their own; for it “calls “not the righteous but sinners to repentance.” This gospel looks with no favourable aspect upon such as are seeking requisites to prepare them to come to CHRIST, but looks benignly upon the poor, the miserable, the blind, and the naked. It says not one word of peace or pardon to the wise man, or the disputer of this world, while it scatters its influence among those who are accounted worst by the sons of pride.

THIS

THIS word of JESUS CHRIST, which saves men from the power of sin, and the captivity of the Devil, has indeed an influence upon its enemies ;—but it is to torment them, as it doth their father the Devil,—“ who believes “ and trembles.” The same word that begets faith in the souls of those who are called, and gives hope and great joy to the wretched and miserable among men, begets pain and remorse in the consciences of the proud, and torment in the minds of Devils. Though this faith, which the gospel produces and brings forth, has received the opprobrious name of the faith of Devils ; yet it is the word of CHRIST’s patience and power, which begets in the souls of his chosen people a belief of the same truth which makes those evil spirits tremble. The faith of saints and devils is no way different ; the difference lies in their hopes. The one hath no hope from the truth they believe, but pain and sorrow ; whereas the others from the same truth, have a noble reason of hope, which revives and supports their minds.

WHENEVER any man believes the truth of the gospel, as firmly as the Devils do, it presents to him a ground of hope, that overbalanceth all his reasons of despair. Among those inhabitant of the regions of darkness, notwithstanding of their believing the truth, their reasons of despair outweigh their reasons of hope,—because the gospel is not sent to them.—But to men under every guilty circumstance, it says, “ to you is the “ word of this salvation sent.”

JESUS CHRIST delivers his people when they are in captivity, by opening their eyes, and pointing out to them the way of escape. He opens men’s blinded understandings by the light of his gospel, and “ brings them “ out “ of darkness into his marvelous light :”—The scripture calls this a “ turning them from darkness unto light, “ and from the power of Satan unto God.” When Satan got man into his prison, he did with him as the *Philistines* did with *Sampson*,—put out his eyes, and it is through ignorance that he holds them in his power.—For whenever the light is made to shine into their hearts,
they

they break his prison, and escape. Hence the gospel saves men, by making them “ know the things which “ belong to their peace.” In this respect, knowledge is the principle of faith, and faith the exercise of knowledge :—For, “ only those who know JEHOVAH’s name “ will put their trust in him.” The gospel becomes a principle of understanding,—which by its own evidence begets assent to its truth in the soul, which in scripture hath received the name of *Faith*. This faith is termed “ the “ substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things “ not seen.”—Or, as that passage may more properly be read ;—“ The firm foundation of things hoped for, and “ the *argument* or *proof* of things not seen.” The testimony of God, made known to men, is the firm foundation of faith, and faith is the argument or proof to us of the truth and reality of what is testified. The gospel gives being to faith, and faith realizes the object to us, or gives it a real existence in our souls. It is by the power of CHRIST’s word that the souls of his people escape out of the snares of the Devil, and forsake his service.

S E C T. 5th.

THIS Redemption is meritorious. It is not *merely* an allusive and figurative one.—When CHRIST is called a Redeemer, it is not because *Moses, Joshua, David*, and others, were so called, but because he is really a Saviour and Redeemer,—who paid the price of our Redemption. The price he paid was truly worthy of all that ever his people can receive on account thereof. It is a sufficient reason, and argument in law and equity, why God should justify the ungodly. The merit of this Redemption arose from the nature and dignity of the person who paid the price of it. Our Saviour was truly God, as well as very man,† and the relation his work had to his infinitely

† The modern enemies of our SAVIOUR begin to sneer at such phrase as the above, and like *Nicodemus*, are ready to say, *how can these things be?* And what they are not able to refute with any shew of reason or argu-

finitely holy person, gave it a value, worthy of all that sinners can ever stand in need of. It is for this reason that our Redeemer is so highly exalted as Mediator,—because being the true God he humbled himself unto the death. The Actions of our Saviour's human nature received an infinite value and dignity from their being the works

argument, they endeavour to turn into ridicule. Yet one may easily perceive that they smile *but aukwardly*, for the force of scripture evidence being so *very* clear against them, makes them, on occasions, betray some degree of concern, mixed with their irrefragable smile.

It would require a good degree of critical knowledge to enable any man to explain away the meaning of so many plain passages of holy scripture, which at first view seem to point out this truth, that the Messiah is God, as well as Man.—For at the same time that he assumes the title of our Goal and Kinsman Saviour, he takes to himself the highest name that ever is assumed by the Creator of the Universe. Isa. xlv. 6. Ka omar Jehovah Melech Israel, ve-goale. Jehovah sabaoth Ani Kishon, va ani acharon, U. mib-bal Gnadi in Elokim. Thus saith JEHOVAH King of Israel, and his kinsman Redeemer, the Lord (JEHOVAH) of Hosts, I am the first and the last, and besides me there is no God. Comp. red with Rev. i. 8. Ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω, ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, ὁ πᾶντοκράτωρ. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord, who is, who was, and is to come, the Almighty. Isa. xlv. 24. Ka Omar Jehovah Goaleka, ve-jitzerka mib-baten, anki Jehovah Gnoshe Kol; note sham-ajim Lebadi, rokagn haaretz me-jitti. Thus saith the Lord, thy kinsman Redeemer, I formed thee from the womb; I am he who made all things; I alone stretched forth the heavens, and by myself spread abroad the earth. Isa. xli. 14. Al-tiri Tolaath Jakol, mete Israel, ani Asart-tick Neum Jehovah ve-goalek, Kedosh Israel. Fear not worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I Jehovah your kinsman Redeemer, the holy one of Israel, will help you. Compared with Acts iii. 14. And ye denied the holy one and the first.

I am inclined to think, that wherever JEHOVAH is in scripture represented as a Goal or kinsman Redeemer, that the Messiah is meant. Jacob gives this name of Goal to an angel, which could be no other but the angel of the covenant: Gen. xlviii. 16. Hamalach ha-goal oti. Michal roagn. The angel, my kinsman Redeemer, from all evil;—which our version reads, “hath redeemed me from all evil.” Job xix. 25. gives the like character to the Messiah: Jad-gnati Goali hai ve-acharon, al-gnapbar jakum. “I know that my kinsman Redeemer is living, and that at last he shall stand upon the dust of the earth.”

It would be but kind in those, who will not allow the Messiah to be the true God, to give us some good reason why he assumes such names, and affirms that he hath performed such works, as none but the Supreme can justly claim, or is able to perform. The old Jewish principles rule still in the hearts of the children of disobedience; for they cannot understand the consistence of Jesus's claim to such a high character, when he was pleased to appear in such a low one.—That is to say, unless they are able to understand as much as their Maker, they will not believe him.

works of him who is "the true God, and eternal life." No finite creature can ever receive *more or greater* favours than our Redeemer merited by his death.—For this reason there is an eternity ordained for the enjoyment of them;—that what can never be exhausted may be ever enjoyed. The song of the redeemed in heaven, is filled with the worth and excellence of JESUS CHRIST, and his Redemption; "Rev. v. 19. Worthy is the Lamb that "was slain to receive glory, honour, dominion, and "power.—For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to "God by thy blood."

C H A P. II.

*The Qualifications necessary to fit the Redeemer to perform
Man's Redemption*

S E C T. 1st.

IT was necessary that our Redeemer should be a party in that covenant, according to which sinners were to be saved. No person who was not able, and worthy to treat with JEHOVAH, and to engage his heart to approach unto him, could be qualified to redeem lost sinners.—And suppose he had been qualified, yet if he had not actually done it, he would have wanted a true legal qualification for his work. Such as do act for others in matters where law is concerned, do not merely act according to their ability, and personal endowments, but according to the law that relates to the transaction. Personal endowments were essentially necessary, but mutual and actual engagements were morally necessary also. As our LORD JESUS CHRIST intended to redeem his people, it was necessary for him as their covenant-head, to be mutually engaged for them, in a contract mutually with his Father, and their God;—that so the will of the parties engaged might be one joint counsel:—So the Prophet tells us, that "the council of peace was between them both, *Zech.* "vi. 13." Had not CHRIST been a party in the covenant of peace, all that he did could not have been answer-
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able to the breach of the covenant of works. The first covenant was broken by *Adam*, as a party in it, and his posterity were ruined in consequence thereof;—so the children of our Redeemer are saved from the ruin of the first covenant by his being a party in the second: I have, saith God, “made a covenant with my chosen, *Psal.* “lxxxix. 3.” By our Redeemer being a party in the covenant of grace, he was qualified to plead the benefits of his redemption for his people when the conditions in that covenant were fulfilled, and could plead the original contract, as a party that was worthy to covenant with God.—Thus, by having really covenanted for guilty sinners, he was qualified to ascertain the number of his seed,—through his knowledge of the contract in which he was a party:—And could plead the word of the Father in that covenant made with him, “when he shall “make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, “and prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord “shall prosper in his hand.” With regard to all this as a party in the covenant of peace, he could say, Lord, do as thou hast said.

OUR Redeemer's being a party in the new covenant qualified him to know both the number of his spiritual seed, and the great and good things that are laid up for them in the covenant of grace and promise. In consequence thereof he could very properly pardon sin, and forgive the iniquity of the guilty, because he knew what he had contracted for in their behalf, and what he was able to do in fulfilling his contract. Had not our Saviour been a party in that covenant his suretyship could have no way been answerable to the necessity of guilty man,—who needed one substituted in his place as a covenant-party. It was entirely owing to the first *Adam's* being a party in the first covenant, that his posterity were found guilty for the breach of it, and it is because *JESUS CHRIST* is a party in the second covenant, that his righteousness in fulfilling it, as their surety, is the reason of their acceptance with God. Our Saviour's righteousness could not have been a covenant one, unless he had been a party in it. So it was an essential qualification to *JESUS CHRIST* our Saviour to be a party in the covenant of grace.

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S E C T. 2d.

IT was an essential qualification in our Redeemer to be related to both God and man. Man's Redemption could not have been effected by any not truly God, and really man:—For Deity could not suffer, and a mere man could not have given such a ransom as was answerable to the spirit of the law, and the demands of justice.—And moreover, as man had offended God, and incurred his just displeasure by disobedience, it was necessary the Reconciler should be able to please God, and restore man into his favour.*

THE most perfect man that ever existed, even the human nature of JESUS CHRIST, unless it had been united to the Deity, could not have effected man's Redemption:—For the most perfect finite service could merit no more than a finite reward, and the death of a finite person could not in the nature of the thing be a price of Redemption from an infinite curse,—justly pronounced against sin, wherever it should be found, or in whatever form.

THERE were two things which made it impossible for a mere man to redeem a guilty world.—The nature of justice required that there should be adequate satisfaction made for the offence committed, that the character of the Most High might be justified in justifying the ungodly. Though we may conceive many things, which we think the Almighty might do, or have done, so far as they respect our interest; yet we are not certain that he could have done otherwise:—On the contrary, we are rather sure, that he could not morally have acted otherwise or than he would have done it. It is not our part
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* When we speak of CHRIST reconciling us to GOD, I know that some alledge that no more is meant than taking away of the enmity of our minds against him.—But the scripture seems to signify something more, that CHRIST had to perform a work whereby it might appear consistent with GOD's holy character, to express himself well pleased towards them who have offended him.—And though nothing which CHRIST did made any change in the Divine mind, yet it makes a great alteration in his conduct towards man.

to say what our Maker could have done as to his power, or any other attribute of his nature;—but whether according to the system of his government revealed to us, could he have acted otherwise agreeable thereto? Was the first system which man was placed in perfect: And did God speak in earnest when he said, “in the day thou eatest, thou shalt die?” Will it not appear more conformable to that system, that a perfect satisfaction be given to his justice expressed in his law, by one who was able to give it, than that the Divine character be any way obscured in its truth and veracity?

IT was therefore necessary that our Redeemer should be God and Man, or EMMANUEL,—that he might be able to support the moral character of the Deity, by giving a righteous and perfect obedience conformable to that law,—which was an exact image of his character;—and might be able to give satisfaction to what truly may be called justice, to make a complete Redemption conformable to the truth and holiness of God. Thus qualified he could give all the satisfaction the purest justice could exact, in the same nature that had given the offence.—Nor does this represent religion in any unfavourable point of light, or set forth the Almighty as cruel and capricious:—When out of his mercy he found a chosen one,—who at the same time that he repaired that awful breach, could suffer no loss to himself.

HAD what JESUS CHRIST did for sinners ruined himself, or had death been able to detain him prisoner;—or had the making of men eternally happy, made him miserable, then might the enemies of the atonement called the scheme of man’s redemption a cruel scheme,—and the Deity severe.—But when the sufferings of JESUS CHRIST were salutary to men, and in the event exalted the character of the Most High in the esteem of men and angels, and brought honour to our Redeemer also, there does not appear any thing in the whole scheme but what is consistent with perfect goodness. Yea, it exalts the goodness, and extolls the love of God.

S E C T. 3d.

IT was necessary that the human nature which CHRIST assumed should be perfectly innocent. Had our Saviour's human nature had either original or actual sin, it could not have been a proper sin-offering;—for in this case he would have needed an atonement for his own iniquity.—But that nature which he assumed, though it was equally related to the believing seed of *Abraham*, yet it was not partaker of any of that pollution which is common to the nature of man. This human nature of JESUS CHRIST was sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and brought forth in an extraordinary manner of a virgin;—and though of the same kind with that of others, was yet free of that natural pollution which stains the best services of such where it prevails.—But JESUS CHRIST “was holy, harmless, “undefiled, and separated from sinners;” without sin, nor was guile found in him. His sacrifice was sinless and perfect, as well as divinely pure and holy,—on account of its relation to him who is the true GOD. Though as a surety he was accounted guilty, as bearing our sins,—yet was he ever separated from sinners, in respect of every moral impurity.

THE pure law could not find the smallest defect in his sin-offering, nor could the severest justice spy the least imperfection in that nature which was given him for a sacrifice.

THERE was a passive innocence in the human nature of JESUS CHRIST,—whereby he was morally inoffensive. He had no disposition to give or to take offence, as is common among men.—He had no selfish pride in him, nor any inordinate passions arising from the connection between his soul and body. Passions and appetites, not subordinate to pure reason and the will of God, are peculiar to corrupt and imperfect creatures: In CHRIST there were none such. He had no ambition to make him envy or grieve at the good of others, but he constantly rejoiced to see men happy, and to make them so. All the
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affections of his human soul were passively pure and holy, and could not be moved to think or do evil.

BUT this was not all; the purity of his nature did not merely dispose him to do no evil, or injury to any, but it inclined him to seek men's happiness on all occasions. "He went continually about doing good," from a holy propensity of mind towards what was worthy and virtuous. Our Redeemer had no occasion to be excited to do good by any motives from without,—for he had the law of God in his heart. He had a perfect knowledge of moral rectitude, and a perfect love of all truth; "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity, therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of joy above thy fellows, *Psal. xiv. 7.*" It was as natural for him to love truth, as it is for other men under the influence of corruption to err and go astray from it. It was the love of righteousness which constantly inclined him to do his Father's will,—and made him pursue the great end for which he came into the world,—which was "to seek and save that which was lost."

S E C T. 4th.

IT was necessary that he should be appointed and have instructions for his office of Redeemer. Without a special appointment and proper instructions, the execution of any office would be intrusion. Natural endowments may fit a person for the execution of an office, but does not morally qualify him in law, without appointment thereto. Our Redeemer did not run unsent,—but "was called of God as was *Aaron.*" Hence we have frequently in the gospel his declaration, "that the Father sent him." He demonstrated his divine mission by works, that were truly miraculous and wonderful:—To these he appeals as a proof of his being sent of God,—"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not, *John x. 37.* The Father which sent me, he doth the work, *John xiv. 10.* CHRIST was called to his office by God in the most solemn manner;—"The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent. "Thou

"Thou art a priest for ever, *Psal.* cx. 4." When CHRIST speaks of himself as the Good Shepherd, he opposeth himself to such as came *unsent*,—whom he calls *thieves* and *robbers*. It was because our Saviour was appointed to this office of surety, that he had security for assistance to support him in his work. His mission and appointment were constantly before his eyes, and upon this he founds his arguments in his prayer to the Father. "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do,—" "therefore glorify thou me with that glory which I had" "with thee before the world was, *John* xvii. 5."*

HE could plead the law of his appointment, and the oath that was made to him, as the High Priest over the house

* Dr Watts, Mr Allen, and some others, from this text, would attempt to prove the pre-existence of CHRIST's human soul. But it does not seem that our Saviour's prayer refers to any glory he had in possession before the world, but to what he had in promise. As one of the *Elohim*, or *Swearers*, or *Covenanters*, he had a promise made to him in that covenant of peace, of aid and support in his suffering, and of a glorious resurrection from the dead. He had this glory promised him before the world began. This was a glory he had with the Father, to receive a right by promise of a glorious resurrection:—So his prayer here must refer to a promise he had in his eye,—for the promise is the rule of the prayer of faith.

The royal prophet personating JESUS CHRIST, foretold what our Saviour here prays for, *Psal.* xvi. 10. "Thou wilt not leave my life, or "soul, in the grave; nor suffer thy holy One to see corruption."—Which may be explained by *Luke* i. 35. "The holy Thing which shall "be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God:—"For the word, *Psal.* xvi. 10. is *Chesed*, not *Kodesh*,—the word which in the Old Testament is used to signify the Holy One of Israel.

Our Redeemer had the glory to be a partner in the great transaction where man's redemption was settled,—and received a promise, that his human nature should not sink under suffering, nor be left to see corruption.—And he here says, that the mutual glory of him and his Father was concerned in that work he was now about to engage in. He puts up a prayer of faith for the accomplishment of that promise, which concerned both his Father's glory and his own. "Glorify me with thine "own self;" intimating that the glory of both was concerned, *i. e.* fulfil thy promise to me, and make thy faithfulness appear conspicuous. When the council of peace was between us both, it was my glory to receive a promise of help and assistance, and thine to make it.—Therefore glorify me with thine own self. Here our SAVIOUR asks what he bare witness to, when he bare record, as one of the *Elohim*, concerning the transaction of grace. There seems no occasion of assuming any new hypothesis upon this subject, when the truth may be accounted for without any.

house of God. Without an appointment to his office and work, there would have been no certainty that ever his work should have been accepted:—But as he was solemnly appointed by the oath of JEHOVAH, the law of the appointment secured to him acceptance whenever he should finish his work.

C H A P. III.

The Effects of CHRIST's Redemption, when it is manifested to the Souls of Believers.

S E C T. Iſt.

IT produceth an esteem of CHRIST, and all things that are his. When JESUS CHRIST makes himself known to his people as a Redeemer, and displays the glory of his Redemption unto them, the amiableness of his person, and the greatness of the salvation he hath procured by his blood, quite subdues their hearts, and gains their esteem. Such as saw no comeliness in him, why he should be desired,—while under the power of ignorance, and the influence of error, become by the manifestation of his excellencies altogether charmed with his beauty. It is impossible but those who know this blessed object should esteem him;—because his excellencies are morally engaging, and have the power to transform the mind into a sameness of moral likeness with himself. The Apostle, who understood this subject better than most of men, affirms it as a matter of certainty,—That “by beholding the glory of God, through Jesus, we are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory.” There are none who know the Redeemer but do love him, and such as do not render him their supreme regard, do testify that they know him not.

THERE is something in the world which men call Knowledge, which is only a *specious* resemblance of it, yet is oftentimes mistaken for true understanding. Thro' means of the gospel revelation men may come to *some* specious

specious understanding of the character of JESUS CHRIST, so as to enable them to speak *as if* they knew him:— But then their knowledge is no more than the wisdom of words. This kind of knowledge may be called a passing view of CHRIST's character, which may lead men to some speculation, but can never be reduced to practice. This sort of spurious knowledge is like that which we learn of the characters of men at court in the common news,— which may enable us to form conjectures concerning the leading draughts of *certain* reputations, but being remote from the persons, and the theatre on which they act, we are uncertain of the justness of the various descriptions of character which may be given them.—But true knowledge of JESUS CHRIST by the gospel, is like that which we attain by friendly information,—where the informer acts the part of a friendly instructor;—and knowing himself the things which he teacheth and describeth, perfectly represents them with such evidence, that our knowledge becomes certain and real.

THE truths of the gospel, to All who have not felt their power, are only like the common news to a common reader,—which may learn him to speak, but does not afford any certain knowledge, nor make him any wiser:—Yet, a stranger would perhaps not know the difference between such persons, and men of more wisdom, if he only heard them speak. It is action which testifies the truth of true knowledge;—he who pretends to know, but is not truly instructed, exposeth his own ignorance when brought to trial. Christians who are really instructed in the knowledge of the gospel, and understand the character of JESUS CHRIST, are enabled according to their measure, to act his character as a pattern of holiness;—their lives and that of CHRIST are as like one another, in the leading parts of character, as the image of babes and perfect men are like one another. It is a saying common enough with regard to some persons, that it is not for want of knowledge in religion that they do not live as becomes the gospel. This is not true in fact, if we consider the word Knowledge in a strict sense.—Whenever any person knows JESUS CHRIST rightly, it transforms him into his likeness, and disposeth him to walk as he

also walked. The knowledge of things in which men are not much interested, may be attained without producing any visible alteration in their conduct,—nor would men judge fairly of their understanding, if they should conclude them ignorant of what they did not practise,——when neither *pleasure* nor *happiness* are connected with such practice.——The knowledge of things indifferent, may be obtained without any visible evidence in action;——for being indifferent, the practice upon knowing them is not absolutely necessary. But to walk as CHRIST also walked, and to imitate him, as the blessed pattern of holiness and perfection, is absolutely necessary to happiness in this life, or that which is to come.

WHEN the excellencies of CHRIST are made known to the souls of men, the connection between an imitation of them, and everlasting happiness, is also made known;—and the very power of that knowledge inclines the minds of christians to observe the imitation, “*Psal. ix. 10.* “They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee.” “He that loveth not, knoweth not God,” “*1 John iv. 8.*” The Apostle points out the connection between true knowledge of CHRIST, and the work and labour of love. “*1 John ii. 4.* He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ver. 9. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother, abideth in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.” Those who know God, hear and obey what the Apostles of CHRIST hath said;—but whoever form their religious practice upon any other plan, testify that they know not God,—even suppose they should make a great shew of Godliness in will-worship.—Let the Apostle *John* determine this point: “*1 John iv. 6.* We are of God: He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us.—Hereby we know the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: For love is of God; and every one that loveth,

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“ is born of God, and knoweth God.” The reason why men do not esteem JESUS CHRIST, and all things that are his, is because they know him not. *Luke* gives this for the reason in the *Acts* of the Apostles, why the *Jews* condemned and crucified JESUS CHRIST, because they knew him not, “ *Acts* xiii. 27. For they that dwell at “ Jerusalem, because they knew him not, nor yet the “ voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath “ day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.”

WHEREVER JESUS CHRIST makes a true and real discovery of his own Character and Redemption to the souls of men by his gospel,—so as the discovery becomes the materials of knowledge, or rather knowledge itself, it as necessarily begets esteem of JESUS, as any active principle produceth its *proper* effects. It becomes a part of a believer’s moral constitution, and operates in the soul as a principle of action :—And this knowledge expresseth itself in the way of esteeming CHRIST, and all that is his. Such as do not esteem our Redeemer, it is because they do not know him :—They have not the full conviction of his excellence, fitness, and sufficiency.

I KNOW it has been often said, that men may have the knowledge and full conviction of the truth, and yet not be truly reformed thereby.—This I cannot so easily understand :—For our Saviour tells us, that such as know the truth, are set at liberty.—“ Ye shall know the truth, “ and the truth shall make you free, *John* viii. 32.” Wherever the scripture speaks of wicked men knowing God, it must be understood comparatively with others who are more ignorant of the things which they are said to know. A servant may know his master’s will, and not do it, *i. e.* the things which he knoweth may be what his master requireth, but still he does not know as he ought to know,—and it is called knowledge, in contrast to other men’s total ignorance. As long as men are not reformed in their hearts and lives, they cannot properly be said to be convinced of truth,—nor accounted such who know JESUS CHRIST;—and it is their ignorance which keepeth them in bondage to Satan.

THEY have such wisdom which passeth for true knowledge in the world, and which may make a very specious appearance, and deceive men;—but it never proves its efficacy by that labour of love, and esteem of JESUS CHRIST, which true knowledge produceth in them who have it. What *Solomon* says of wisdom, may be strictly said of knowledge,——“It giveth life to them who have it.” What has made men fall into a mistake, in thinking that themselves or others have been possessed of true knowledge, when they have been really ignorant of truth, is their not considering the difference between transient views, and solid understanding. There are many transient and passing views, which persons may have of objects, which cannot justly be called true knowledge.——In objects of sense they may be called glances,——in objects of moral truth, they may be called hints,——in matters of fact, or testimony, they may be called notices. Men may have some glances of a figure whose properties they do not understand, and suppose they had a passing view of it, yet they do not understand the form nor use of it without instruction:—A moral truth may be represented to our mind by some hints, but is either removed before we understand it, or the mind parts with it before it knows it:—Matters of fact may be brought to our hearing upon a credible enough testimony, which may give notice of very surprising or profitable things;——but the notices may either be short and imperfect, or not often enough repeated to leave an impression of the truth of the facts, and the authority of the author upon our minds,——and in this respect is not true knowledge. This is something like a tale that is told,——which though it may afford for the time some entertainment, is not competent to be reduced into practice.

THOSE three kinds of passing views may be illustrated by these similitudes.——The first is like one who views his face in a glass, but forgets what manner of man he was:——The second is like one who receives the dictates of a master upon a subject, the rudiments of which he hath never learned,——so has no knowledge of; but as far as any thing he hath heard said is agreeable with something

thing he has already learned :—The latter is like one who receives the news from another who passeth by, but is not able to form a judgment of what is reported,—because he has not time to be acquainted with the author who reports the facts. That knowledge which superficial enquirers have in matters of religion, is like the two last sorts of knowledge. Things marvelous may transiently be pointed out to them,—and alarming facts may be told them, which may surprize them,—or create a sudden transport of wonder or fear, according to the nature of the things intimated.—But what so suddenly struck them, may as quickly be removed, so that it never becomes a principle of action in their hearts, nor leaves any just or lasting impression upon their minds.—This neither affords a sufficient information to the judgment, nor produceth a full conviction in the conscience, of the truth of what is reported. It is only a transient passing view of truth, but not the knowledge thereof. The knowledge of JESUS CHRIST consists in the understanding of the character of him that speaketh ;—when he makes the report the matter of knowledge in the soul, he maketh it shew his own veracity, and a believer is instructed as well in the character of the person who reveals the truth, as in the report he makes.

THE gospel has this excellency above all other reports :—That it is calculated to make known the character and veracity of him who publisheth it, and sheweth with the surest evidence, who he is that is the author of it. We have no proof but what the gospel itself contains, that God is the author of it,—nor have we any certain evidence to satisfy us that we are not imposed upon, but what is expressed in the very testimony we believe. Whoever believes the gospel, is firmly persuaded at once, that it is God that speaks, and his word they believe. The first true knowledge of God comes by the gospel,—and it is calculated to produce it. It is much better contrived to make us understand, what God is, and what are his attributes, than all his works put together, for it gives light, “ The entrance of thy word giveth light.” Divine revelation is too often considered as a sort of passive organ, something like the sun, moon, and stars, which are said

to declare the Glory of God;—and there are several people in the world will with difficulty admit that we can know it to be from God, till we learn it *extra seipsum*, without itself.—But the difficulty here is insurmountable, and ends in *Atheism*. For when men depart from scripture itself, to seek for the knowledge of its author,—where do they land? In eternal doubts, and scepticism. “By faith we understand, that the worlds were made by “the word of God.”—By the knowledge of the sacred records we learn the character of their author, and receive the certain proof that God made the world:—But when we begin to seek the Divine Character among his works at first hand, on purpose to settle the character of scripture, we are obliged first to prove, that the universe is his handy work.—This is still more difficult to prove without help from the scripture, than to find the character of the author of revelation without such aid. The gospel seems to be suited to some capacity in us, whereby it produceth in our minds an assent to its truth by making known its author.

THIS knowledge is not like opinion, which is founded upon probability, nor like conjecture, which is grounded only on some probable marks of truth;—but is founded upon certain understanding of facts, concerning which there can be no reasonable doubt; and on the testimony of one who neither will nor can deceive us.

WHEN this knowledge is obtained, it is not like opinion, which may vary with probability, but it becomes a principle of action in the mind,—and in its nature varies no more than the record on which it is founded. It may have degrees, according to the measure of divine manifestation;—but as to its nature, it is founded upon principles that are invariable. It may increase or decline upon occasions, but can never totally fail, more than its first principles can be destroyed. It is compared “to the “shining light, which shineth more and more unto the “perfect day.” This knowledge begets a lasting esteem of CHRIST, on account of his many excellencies that are the sum of that heavenly wisdom.

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FROM the divine records the christian is informed, that the Redeemer is a divine person,—"Fairer than the sons of men, and more excellent than all mountains of prey."—That he excels in wisdom, power, goodness and truth;—but rests in his love, and rejoiceth in mercy. Those who know JESUS CHRIST, consider him not only as mighty to save, but as the most excellent object of contemplation and delight,—having in him every beauty which can give pleasure to the mind. It was from a certain knowledge of *this* that *David* expressed himself so earnestly in these pathetic lines, "*Psal.* xxvii. 4. One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that all the days of my life I may dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold his beauty, and enquire in his temple." The christian's esteem of JESUS is founded upon what is amiable in his character;—what is not more striking than it is sweet. In this, love and esteem are something distinct. Love, which is the desire of enjoyment of any object that is agreeable, considered at some distance, is more engaged with what is striking, than what is amiable;—but when the object is obtained, and all the striking parts of character appear mixed with sweetness and amiableness,—then love rests in the object, and becomes lasting esteem.

WHEN a miserable sinner, under the apprehensions of guilt and the Divine displeasure, receives the intimation of the Redeemer's character, as one who hath paid his ransom, and hath delivered him from going down to the pit, he is ready to be enamoured with his love and compassion,—and admires him rather as one who hath done him a real service, than one who is intrinsically worthy of his highest regard;—but when he comes to consider his character more strictly, after his surprize at his mercy is somewhat abated, he comes to see that his chief happiness lies in being joined in fellowship with one, who in all respects is so engaging, that his soul will never need any thing more to satisfy its desires, through an endless tract of duration. When CHRIST and his redemption is manifested in the soul, the mind rests in the esteem of him,—who is worthy of its most exalted regards.

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BUT this knowledge makes christians also esteem all that is CHRIST'S. — Every appointment of his, and every ordinance which bears the stamp of his authority, are dear to them who know him. — His character as a Lawgiver, who rules in mount Zion, is the object of their esteem, — and therefore all his laws appear righteous. It is not how agreeable some ordinances are to flesh and blood, or how they may suit the ends of worldly policy and temporal interest, that engageth a christian to observe them, — but whether they have the seal of CHRIST'S appointment added to them. The knowledge of CHRIST, our Redeemer, teacheth all his children to consider obedience to him in observing his ordinances, not as means which merely lead to glory, — but a very part of glory *itself*; — for it is their glory to keep his commandments, in every stage of existence whatsoever. The children of heavenly wisdom wisely consider, that there is no difference between the militant state of CHRIST'S church, and that of the triumphant, with respect to men's obligation to obey him, — nor will they ever have any desire to be freed from his service. — And therefore they consider these ordinances, which are appointed to them in this life to observe, as the only heavenly exercise they are capable of for the present.

THOSE who know JESUS CHRIST, their Redeemer, are not taken with the splendour of rituals, nor engaged with the pompous means of devotion; — but are more concerned about the spirit and truth of religion, than the elegance of external modes of worship. When they come to the house of God, “they are more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools.” The vocal praise of christian worship gives them more pleasure, — because they can mutually join in that devotion, than all the symphony of instrumental music. The *Jewish* sound of Organs, Symbols, and Harps, give no delight to a christian's ear, because CHRIST has not commanded that mode of praise in the New Testament sanctuary. Such as know CHRIST crucified, chuse to direct their devotion by some express laws of his authorising, and will not venture to perform his service according to their own will and pleasure. —

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They esteem all his precepts and promises,——they say of his commandments, that in all things they are right. Every promise is the object of a believer's trust and confidence,——and what their Lord says, they are able to receive as faithful sayings:——Because they know the veracity of the author, they chearfully trust his promise. Though many circumstances in providence may intervene, seemingly unfavourable to the accomplishment of God's promise, yet the knowledge they have of the Divine character, supports their confidence under every unfavourable circumstance.——Being satisfied concerning God's love towards them, by his giving his son, they conclude, that with him he will freely give them all things.

M O R E O V E R, they who have been favoured with the discovery of CHRIST's character as their Redeemer, will love all the children of their heavenly father;——for as they esteem him that begat, they will also love them that are begotten. This esteem is of the same kind towards all those who receive the truth in the love thereof, and who bear the image of their heavenly father.—And tho' the children of God may differ in their moral stature, or have different views of some things:——Though they may have different gifts, and various imperfections, in this present state;——yet they esteem one another on account of their common relation to the one Father in JESUS CHRIST. Difference in outward circumstance, or variance in opinion, will not alter their opinion of one another,——while they agree in the original principles of knowledge;——namely, the knowledge of CHRIST crucified. Whenever men begin to disesteem one another, and instead of loving one another, do most heartily hate each other, there is reason to fear something worse than difference in opinion.—Nothing but total ignorance of JESUS CHRIST will produce such a dismal effect. Men's opinions are what they cannot help, more than they can add a cubit to their stature,——and if we think them wrong, we ought to pity them, but not hate them. Christian love begets compassion for a brother when he errs, and will not suffer the mind to remove its regards for what is only his misfortune.

S E C T. 2d.

IT produceth peace and tranquillity of mind. When christians have attained to the true knowledge of CHRIST, and the Redemption he hath obtained for them, they receive full satisfaction concerning their peace with God through him,—and are persuaded they shall not be brought into condemnation; or in the language of the *Psalmist*, “They shall not die but live, and discover the works of “the Lord.” This occasions an inward ease and satisfaction of soul,—because God, who is the chief good, and whose anger is most to be dreaded, is now reconciled through the blood of JESUS to the guilty.

WHEN this great privilege is obtained, the children of heavenly wisdom find no occasion to be troubled with what passes in the world;—for this reason, be they poor or rich, weak or strong, as to the things pertaining to this life, they are content, because their treasure is in heaven. Satisfaction concerning peace with our Maker, not only makes us easy ourselves, but makes us behave easily towards others with whom we may be concerned. It does not appear that persons who behave with severity towards their fellow man, have any pleasure in contemplating the Divine character;—for all severity proceeds from a sourness of mind, which the love of God subdues wherever it prevails. When men, called christians, through a cruelty of disposition, endeavour to hurt one another, for conscience sake, it argues they have but bad consciences: For if their consciences were purified, they would endeavour to follow peace with all men. All true peace of mind arises from satisfaction with those things that are the object of moral contemplation. There are two things especially which fall under this denomination,—the relations we stand in to God,—and the happiness or misery that arise to us from those relations. When these appear favourable to us, they make us happy, when we contemplate them; if unfavourable, they make us unhappy.

WHEN upon enquiry it is found, that the character
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of God appears opposite to what we find to be our own present leading character, it must produce a very great uneasiness in the mind, and make us unhappy. If we find that God stands in the relation of a just and righteous judge to us, and we in the relation of guilty sinners, it will cause no little pain and uneasiness, if we be not quite past feeling.—But if it is found, that he is related to us as a gracious and reconciled God, thro' JESUS CHRIST, bestowing pardon freely upon the guilty, it will produce peace and satisfaction in the soul. Our happiness and misery entirely depend upon what relation we stand in to God, and he to us. To consider him as a just Judge, without perceiving his character as reconciled through his beloved Son, sets before us a very awful prospect;—for in that character he condemns the guilty.—But when he is considered as the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, in JESUS CHRIST, he is represented, as just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly. When this great point of peace with God is obtained, and the intimation of it made to the conscience, contentment with every other circumstance of life will be the necessary consequence; this will dispose men to live peaceably, as far as in them lies with every one. It argues a bad conscience, and corrupt heart, to have a constant disposition to quarrel with others about things that are no ways momentous. When we consider the connection of what has been said, we shall not be able to give any other reason for men falling out with their fellow christians and brethren, but that they know not JESUS CHRIST, and are at variance with their Maker;—for were they in good terms with the Almighty, they would find no great difficulty to live peaceably with all men.—And we may easily learn from observation, that a good man is not at so much difficulty to live peaceably with his enemies, as bad men and hypocrites are to live in peace with their most intimate friends. Whoever is fully persuaded of what JESUS hath done for them, will not grudge to seek peace with their very foes;—they know they cannot follow a better example, than that of CHRIST. The various murmurings which prevail among nominal professors of religion, only testify how little they are acquainted with that Saviour who died to make

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make peace for men, and shed his precious blood to obtain for them forgiveness of sin.

THERE are many more effects which the manifestation of CHRIST, and Redemption through him, produce in the souls of those who believe the record concerning him,—which I am obliged to leave out of this Essay, lest I should swell it to an undue size.—I shall therefore finish it with observing, that our whole conversation will be directed according to our knowledge and belief of this subject. Wherever it prevails as an article of religion in truth, it will dispose the believers to walk as CHRIST also walked. It is one of those doctrines of grace that purify the heart, and animates the whole conduct of christians.—Infidelity in this particular will not long lie concealed,—for as a man thinketh, so is he,—and he will shew the abundance of his heart by the manner of his acting.—But all who believe in CHRIST will be careful to maintain good works.

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